

VZCZCXRO8139
OO RUEHBC RUEHCN RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHGH RUEHKUK RUEHVC
DE RUEHBJ #1110 1141035
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 241035Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3650
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 6914
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0569
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4830
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 001110

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/24/2034
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [ENRG](#) [PTER](#) [MNUC](#) [IR](#) [CH](#) [PK](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: MFA ARMS CONTROL DG ON IRAN AND SOUTH ASIA

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson.
Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Iran remained suspicious of U.S. intentions, but the new approach by the United States and the E3-plus-3 was the best way forward on the nuclear issue, MFA Arms Control and Disarmament Department Director General Cheng Jingye told A/DCM April 24. China had engaged Tehran "at different levels and in different places" to urge the Iranians to respond positively to the E3-plus-3 invitation to meet, and Tehran "got the message," Cheng reported. China believed the freeze-for-freeze proposal represented a good starting point for restarting talks, and that progress on the nuclear issue was "closely related" to enhancing bilatera contacts between the United States and Iran, Cheng said. A strong, stable government in Pakistan was the best way to deal with terrorism and defeat al-Qaeda, Cheng said. In Afghanistan, the Taliban needed to be influenced "internally" through dialogue with its moderate elements, Cheng said. END SUMMARY.

E3-plus-3 Approach Positive, but Iranians Suspicious

¶2. (C) MFA Arms Control and Disarmament Department Director General Cheng Jingye told A/DCM April 24 that the new U.S. approach to Iran was "constructive," noting that China had encouraged the United States in the past to take up direct talks with Tehran. He said the new approach, while not guaranteeing success, was an important step for making progress on the Iran nuclear issue. He stressed that the Iranians were still suspicious of U.S. intentions and had expressed concern that the United States might have changed tactics but not its underlying strategy. The outcome of the April 8 meeting in London of the E3-plus-3 "should help Iran make the right choice," Cheng said.

Urging Iran to Respond Positively to E3-plus-3 Offer

¶3. (C) The A/DCM urged Cheng to use China's influence to persuade Iran to respond positively to the E3-plus-3 offer to meet. Since the London meeting, Cheng said, China had engaged Tehran "at different levels and in different places" to urge the Iranians to respond positively to the invitation, and he believed the Iranian leadership "got the message."

Freeze-for-Freeze the Starting Point

¶4. (C) China believed the freeze-for-freeze proposal represented a good basis to restart dialogue with Tehran, Cheng said, and the E3-plus-3 currently had a unified position with a "clear understanding" that new unilateral sanctions would not be taken up during the current phase. He said that China believed that the nuclear issue was "closely

related" to bilateral contact between the United States and Iran, and that even incremental progress on bilateral contact would help with the nuclear issue.

Af/Pak

¶5. (C) DG Cheng stressed the need for a strong, stable government in Islamabad and said that the international community had to demonstrate political and economic support for Pakistan. He indicated that a strong government in Pakistan was the best way to address U.S. concerns such as counter-terrorism and defeating al-Qaeda. On Afghanistan, Cheng said the Taliban needed to be influenced "internally" through dialogue with its moderate elements in order to prevent the more radical elements from consolidating power.
PICCUTA